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MORE THAN CONQUERORS.

BY

LUCIA E. F. KIMBALL.

No truth or goodness realized by man ever dies, or can die; but all is still here, and, recognized or not, lives and works through endless changes.— *Carlyle.*

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MORE THAN CONQUERORS.

No Truth, or Goodness realized by man ever dies, or can die: but all is still here, and, recognized or not, lives and works through endless changes.—*Carlyle*.

HIS WITNESSES.

The dear Lord's best interpreters
Are humble human souls.
The gospel of a life like hers
Is more than books and scrolls.
From scheme and creed the light goes out,
The saintly fact survives,
The blessed Master none can doubt
Revealed in holy lives. — *Whittier*.

TRAVELERS in the Holy Land are pointed to a little house in the Via Dolorosa, where lived St. Veronica, upon whose veil, employed to wipe away the blood and sweat from the brow of Christ, his image was miraculously impressed. This is simply tradition, but it has given to the world a tender suggestion of faithful service and reward. We wonder or we smile, at the story, according to our frame of mind, but all the while in human souls a miracle more wondrous and sweet is going on, by which they receive a likeness to their Lord.

The Christian world can hardly linger too long or too lovingly over the lives of its saints, many of them so humble and obscure that they

are well-nigh unknown and unthought of save by Him whose divine image they bear.

I am thinking now of some such lives, simple, pure and true, whose precious perfume has ~~been~~ wafted into mine. I write concerning them, not because anything of beauty can be added to their characters through being known, neither from any fear that they will not be gloriously crowned by the Master himself. But those of us who are striving and have not yet attained, stand in sore need of the help such lives can give. There are sad, gentle souls that never seem to catch the warmth and brightness of Christian joy and triumph. Their religion envelopes them in a kind of tender twilight. Sometimes the shadows are dispelled at the close of life, and they enter heaven by a shining way. Sometimes they pass from us in a pathetic sadness that brings tears of pity. In regard to such we have only to remember that all those who are truly Christ's will find the perfect day up yonder.

For those Christians who are children of the light, who daily and hourly prove that no earthly pain or privation, no spiritual power of darkness, no mystery of Providence can separate from the love of Christ or dim the clear, steady shining of their faith, we who struggle,

oftentimes wearily and with faint and troubled hearts, may well give thanks.

I ask all those who read these pages to remember that these Christians wore no mystic charm by which they were proof against the arrows of pain and misfortune. They were loving, sensitive, susceptible to the keenest suffering of body and spirit; loneliness, poverty, the giving up of home and friends, wearisome days and nights meant just as much to them as to any one of us. Herein lies the mystery of grace—that in the midst of these things they could still rejoice and triumph.

The question often will arise, and is a perplexing one, why the holiest of God's children often are the objects of his severest discipline. Would not God teach us how much higher he ranks spiritual attainment than material prosperity? "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," but we must remember that the heart of perfect love alone knows what is the highest good. We learn slowly that oftentimes the truest, divinest answer to prayer is the giving of that grace which makes us hopeful and patient with life, whatever it brings.

The acceptance of God's will, not of necessity, but cheerfully, believing that his thoughts toward them could only be of loving kindness

and tender mercy, by these in our own time, is the distinguishing witness of his power just as truly as it was in the lives of the holy men and women who gave lustre to the primitive church. We read the words of this latter class and imagine them too remote to have any real bearing upon the busy, practical life of this nineteenth century. We hold in a kind of wondering veneration the early martyrs, but question if Christians of the present day could as bravely endure persecution and suffering. And yet two of these women, living in our very midst, endured the pains of a thousand martyrdoms, and as heroically as did ever the victims of the Inquisition.

In view of such lives we feel the force of the apostle's words, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

God promises to his most devoted followers no exemption from hardship and trial. It is when passing through the waters and walking through the flames that the heavenly assurance is given, not of deliverance, but of preservation. We have this record concerning his

ancient people, "They thirsted not when he led them through the deserts." Suffering is the royal road which the loveliest of God's children have trod. Of the "needs be" we do indeed blindly question, but of the fact that it is given to us not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake, there can be no doubt. It is one of the mysteries that must remain such until the light that shall make all luminous, falls on life's crooked pathway.

God seems to care not so much for what we have and are, as for what we may become. To develop in us the highest moral character must be the end of earthly discipline. The human teachers we remember most gratefully, are not those who gave us the lightest tasks and the broadest liberty, but those who were truest to us in that they looked beyond the present and saw our future need. And shall we not in that higher and better life thank the great Teacher for the hard lessons he set us to learn here, over which, it may be, we shed many rebellious tears?

Far back in the twilight of spiritual thought, Socrates said: "The soul is most certainly immortal and imperishable, and will really exist in the unseen world, taking nothing with it but the discipline gained here."

Celia Thaxter tells us concerning the beau-

ties of her island home, where she early came close to the wonderful heart of Nature, that ever she longed to speak these things that make life so sweet; to speak the wind, the cloud, the bird's flight, the sea's murmur. But fairer, more wondrous far than these glories of the natural world is the outcome of divine grace in the human soul. In my childhood and early girlhood I looked daily into the gentle face of one whose life was an unceasing conflict with intense physical suffering and depressing weakness, and yet her serene brightness and lovely patience filled our home with a tender warmth and gladness. The gentle dew of that heavenly life dropped its silent blessing into my young heart as an abiding joy. This same grace I have seen so gloriously manifest in other lives, of which I feel at liberty to write, that ever I have longed to speak these things that make this common, every-day life so wonderfully grand and blessed.

"If my life might only be a bridge upon which some soul might pass over the chasm of doubt and become altogether believing," was the constant expression of that lovely Christian woman, whose character is so beautifully unfolded by Augustus Hare, in his "Memorials of a Quiet Life."

The weary, toiling, sorrow-burdened world

longs for comfort and courage—needs to be infused with the inspiration of hope. Could we make it feel the real gladness of religion, I apprehend its conversion to Christianity would be hastened. True Christian joyfulness is something quite different from the worldly flush of victory and selfish attainment. Neither is it akin in any way to the religion of pleasure which lures like an *ignis fatuus* the feet of the unwary, into a brilliant path that ends in darkness.

The young are often dazzled by the seeming happiness and prosperity of unbelievers and skeptics. Could they see the lives of many of these, taken as a whole, the refuge of lies under which they hide would appear sufficiently wretched. The brilliant German pleasure lover, Heinrich Heine, said at the height of his voluptuous life amid the giddy whirl of Paris, “The fairer and happier generations that will rise up and bloom in the atmosphere of a religion of pleasure, will smile sadly when they think of their poor ancestors whose life was passed in melancholy abstinence from the joys of this beautiful earth, and who faded away into spectres from the mortal compression which they put upon the warm and glowing emotions of sense.”

“Twenty years later this same Heine, who

had touched everything pure and holy with 'the red fire of his sinister mockery,' proved by his own words how utterly worthless this religion of pleasure is when real calamity comes upon one—just when he needed its comforts most, it totally failed him. Stricken with an incurable disease, waiting for death, he wrote: 'The great pot stands smoking before me, but I have no spoon to help myself; what does it profit me that my health is drunk at banquets, out of gold cups, and in the most exquisite wines, if I myself, while these ovations are going on, lonely and cut off from the pleasures of the world, can only just wet my lips with barley-water? What great good does it do me that all the roses of Shiraz open their leaves and burn for me with passionate tenderness? Alas! Shiraz is some two hundred leagues from the Rue d'Amsterdam, where, in the solitude of my sick chamber, all the perfume I smell is that of hot towels. Alas! the mockery of God is heavy upon me. The great author of the universe, the Aristophanes of heaven, has determined to make the petty earthly author, the so-called Aristophanes of Germany, feel to his heart's core what pitiful needle-pricks his cleverest sarcasms have been, compared with the thunderbolts which his divine humor can launch against feeble mortals.' "

Contrast these utterances with the words of the Christian soldier, St. Paul, in his hour of supreme trial. His situation was pitiful enough. An old white-haired man, bowed with age and conflict, shut in by the gloomy walls of a Roman dungeon, the victim of the cruel and powerful Nero. With simple pathos he gives the finishing touch to this sad picture: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me." And yet his language is not that of despair, but of triumph—"Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me. I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

This same triumphant pæan has been echoed all down through the ages by multitudes in every clime and station in life, who, entering into fellowship with Christ's suffering, have still been "more than conquerors through him that loved us," and blessed witnesses of "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe."

SAINT MARGARET.

"'Tis not alone from legend and old story,
'Tis not alone from canvas dark with time,
That holy saints, crowned with celestial glory,
Smile down upon us from their height sublime.

* * * * *

"Yes God bethanked ! though the pure saints of story,
And holy martyrs that the artist paints,
Are veiled in radiance and crowned with glory,
There still are halos for our unknown saints."

It was a very humble grave on which we laid the fragrant wreath of wood myrtle and white anemones, yet we lingered long beside it, that golden September afternoon, and talked tenderly of the plain, simple woman who lay there. Some way those shy, sweet flowers, gathered from out the stillness of dim old woods, seemed so like her life, hidden away from the world's sight, just as God hides away so many pure, sweet lives—with which to surprise us, it may be, some day.

You would have said it was a poor dwelling for a saint, the small, weather-beaten, gray old house, where this woman spent her life, with nothing attractive about it, save the bit of green grass in front, and the woods waving cool and shady behind it. I forgot the sunshine, that always seemed to touch that

one spot with a tender warmth and brightness. Plain as was the outside, the inside was no less so. How well I remember the white floor and walls, the pine chairs and table and old-fashioned chest of drawers that made up its furniture. How well I remember the wrinkled face with the thin, white hair drawn straight away from it. It was such a kindly face one quite forgot its plainness.

She was Aunt to all the neighborhood. Aunt Peggy we called her, for short. The children loved her, and she always had some little surprise for them, no matter when they happened to call. Either from the pine cupboard with its scanty show of crockery, or from the old bureau, she brought forth some simple present. Perhaps it was only an early summer apple, rosy and fragrant, or a curious, scalloped cake, or a bright pin-cushion, the dear stiff fingers had made. But presents or not, I think we should have gone there all the same, for the sake of hearing the pleasant voice, and seeing the kindly face, which told better than words, how large and sweet was the soul behind it.

She was my mother's friend, and seldom forgotten when the Saturday's baking was done, or Christmas or New Year's came round. From any rare luxury my mother always laid aside

a part for St. Margaret, for she said "The best was none too good for God's poor." I was often the messenger sent with these little gifts, and I remember how the brook seemed to sing sweeter, and the blue sky to be fairer and nearer as I climbed the hill on my way home. I think St. Margaret always gave more than she received, by her cheerful content and hopeful patience.

She accepted the portion God had given her, with a brave courage. She seemed not to question why her life was so lonely, why her brother's intellect had been clouded from a child, and the care of him laid upon her in her young womanhood. "Poor Jakey is having a hard day!" she would say when he was wild with his harmless ravings. "Poor Jakey!" She kept him faithfully till God took him into the light, and then she lived on her lonely life with the same patient grace. I said she *seemed* not to question God's dealings with her and with Jakey, but no doubt she had silently struggled with this mystery of his providence, and in agony of spirit had asked why the strong man who might have been her protection was more helpless than a child. No doubt she had prayed that this great darkness might pass from his mind, as only a loving woman can pray for the object of

her affection. And God had answered her as he answers so many—not by removing the trial, not by lifting the cross, but by giving in the midst of sorrow, a heavenly peace—the quietness of perfect trust. The voice of the Master came to the trouble-tossed soul as it came of old to the affrighted disciples toiling in the deep sea with contrary winds, “It is I!” She could abide the storm, assured through all its tumult of the Divine Presence.

I remember the days when she came to visit my mother, and they talked together as only those can who are a reflection and a suggestion to each other. From simple, every day topics they came naturally to higher and better ones. How reverently they talked of holy women, and the saints and martyrs of old, wishing that they might follow in their footsteps—never dreaming, dear humble souls, that there could be nothing grander in saint or martyr than their own pure faith and love.

When we left the old home for a new one far away, my mother said it was harder to leave this friend than any other; and when she was waiting, saintly and beautiful, for the gates of pearl to open before her, she said, one morning full of dewy sweetness, “I should like to see Aunt Peggy to-day and talk with her; she was a dear friend—there was noth-

ing hidden about her"—in her simple way defining one of the loveliest traits of a true friend.

Many years St. Margaret waited for the call to "come up higher." When we went back from the noise and heat of crowded city streets, to the restful quiet of green woods and blue hills, we knew where we should find a cheery welcome, and when we lifted the latch of her poor, old door we knew there was rest and heart's-ease on the other side.

The last time I saw her she had grown very feeble, and was thinking any day her change might come. I had often wondered how it would be with her at the last. She seldom talked of the other world, for she looked with reverent eyes upon heavenly things. But now I found her looking in the face of its great mysteries with a serene confidence. "It will not be long," she said brightly. "I have great quietness and comfort." Sometimes she spent her nights alone, and a neighbor asked her, "Don't you feel troubled for fear you might grow worse in the night, and be all alone?"

"Jenny's folks are very kind to me, and some of them would stay with me all the time," she answered, quite simply; "but I don't need them; I may grow worse at any time, but I am not afraid. The Lord has

been with me eighty years and taken care of me, and he won't leave me now. I am just as safe alone with him as if there were a household." The dear Lord was indeed a reality to her, and the mystery of his still presence brought a solemn joy into her weary, lonesome nights. In this same spirit she remained until she grew so weak and feeble her friends insisted upon remaining with her.

The woods were breaking into a tender green when the call came for St. Margaret. The arbutus buds, that had lain hidden under the snow all winter, were opening their pink cups and sending a new-born sweetness into the warm spring air. The brook sang full and clear, as if rejoicing that it had found a voice, and could help make the world glad. The mellow sunset light filled her little room, and touched the white hair and face with a tender halo. As the twilight deepened the pulse grew fainter--the end was near. How was it with her then? The friends that waited around her bent to catch the words that fluttered on the pale lips, "I am with the Lord." For her no need that the gates should be ajar. Heaven began while yet the spirit lingered in the body.

When the stars came out that night she had passed beyond them, and the moonlight, flood-

ing wood and hill with a tender radiance, came in through the white curtain, drawn over the small window, and fell only on the saint's garment, over which no doubt the angels were keeping a loving watch.

I heard one day in the busy street that St. Margaret was dead. At first I felt the pang that always comes when we let go the hands whose clasp has been strong and true, then the heavenward side dawned brightly upon me. She had seen the King in his beauty—the one supreme joy of heavenly waking. She had met “poor Jakey”—not poor now, but with the clear light of reason beaming from his eyes. Doubtless he had thanked her for her loving care, through the long years when the thick darkness was over him. And my mother—I could imagine how cheerily she would be welcomed by her to the royal banquet of heavenly love. How sweetly they would talk together of things that had once been mysteries—now luminous to eyes that would see no more “through a glass darkly.”

All these things came back freshly to me as I sat by St. Margaret's grave, in the soft shelter of waving pines, through which the sunshine came in a shimmer of golden light, and I thanked God for this blessed life of faith and love.

SAINT FIDELIA.

"The mission of woman on earth! to give birth
To the mercy of heaven descending on earth.
The mission of woman: permitted to bruise
The head of the serpent, and sweetly infuse,
Through the sorrow and sin of earth's registered
curse,
The blessing which mitigates all: born to nurse
And to soothe, and to solace, to help and to heal
The sick world that leans on her."

—*Owen Meredith.*

It was said in a missionary meeting, not long since, by one familiar with the work, "I suppose Fidelity Fiske did more for heathen women than any other ten missionaries ever did before, or have done since."

This remark was doubtless true. With her great and loving work among the Nestorians, the Christian world is as familiar as any written account can make it. One must have heard her own vivid narration of her experience among them; must have listened to their letters as she read them, breathing a spirit of tender and fervid devotion and longing for their "beloved mother," in order to fully appreciate her labor of love.

Of this work there is no need that I should write. What she did for the young girls of her own beloved America, as leader of the

devotional exercises at Mt. Holyoke Seminary, exerting an influence which is doubtless felt in every part of the world to-day, may not be as well known.

She was, indeed, to the pupils of that school, a St. Fidelia; faithful in counsel, admonition and instruction. More than this, she possessed such a bright, serene faith that it transfused her whole being with a kind of spiritual sunshine, which drew into its warmth and tenderness every one with whom she held personal intercourse. Could we have the testimony of those whom she led into the secret and still places of heavenly things—whom she taught that quiet and confident abiding in the Lord is the soul's only true strength, it would, I am sure, be this: that all life has been made nobler and sweeter through her teaching.

It is impossible to estimate the value to young girls of an acquaintance with such a character, uniting, as it did, strength and delicacy, qualities whose combination is so rare we have been wont to consider their union well-nigh impossible. On the top of Mt. Washington grows a tiny, snow-white flower, so fragile it seems as if the gentlest breeze might scatter its petals, and yet it blossoms bravely on those stern rocks where there is scarcely soil enough for it to cling. The fierce

winds toss it rudely, the dew crystallizes over it, and still it blooms on in its fairy-like beauty, proving itself, notwithstanding its extreme delicacy, to be the hardiest of flowerets. One summer day, chilled by the keen breath of the upland air, I found this flower, and as I filled my hands with the slender, waif-like blossoms, I thought how this mountain daisy seemed the type of a perfected character, wherein brave strength and courage blend with gentle patience and the grace of tenderness.

Fidelia Fiske was an enthusiast in the best sense of the word. With all her warm zeal, she possessed such a quiet poise of mind and heart that she avoided the indiscretions which so often accompany such a temperament. Earnest, persistent, whole-souled work, without noise, complaint or gloom, was her life. Her sympathies were quick and tender, and went out spontaneously toward every form of suffering humanity; but it was a sympathy that manifested itself by acts rather than by making much ado. She was fitted, or, I might say, fitted herself by the cultivation of a happy disposition, for her peculiar work. She seemed to be constantly upborne by the inspiration of hope. A woman who spends her life in bearing the griefs and carrying the sorrows of humanity has need of a clear faith

and a brave courage. She seemed to have such an open vision of what lay beyond the misery of earth—of God's all-embracing, all-reaching love, that she could walk on, in the midst of sin and sorrow, and keep a face full of light and comfort, a soul sweet and joyous to its very center. Like Elisha, when others saw only the encamping hosts of the enemy, she saw the mountains full of God's chariots and horsemen, and felt that greater were those for the truth than those against it. The joy of the Lord was literally her strength.

She gave herself to her work without reserve, and for life. This, I apprehend, was one secret of her success. God seldom blesses half-hearted efforts, or smiles upon the people who put their hand to the plough, with never so great zeal and courage, it may be, and then are frightened or turn back when it runs against the first stubble. There are many gifts dropped into the Lord's treasury: money, influence, intellect; but that which brings us into nearest fellowship with Christ, is what we give of ourselves. She daily bore the cross of Christ, but it was flower-wreathed with her great love for the Master. Her soul was alive to all that was purest and sweetest in human life, even while it was manifested

to her in the worst aspects. She saw the possible good in every human soul. To make that possibility a reality, she toiled with all the winning persuasion of her generous nature. To her in the fullest sense could be applied the language of Job, when he said, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me."

A few extracts from the journal of a scholar at Mt. Holyoke, during one of the last years of her ministrations there, will give some idea of what she was, not only to one, but to many. It was her power of estimating the value of seemingly small things, of entering into sympathy with individual character and wants, that rendered her peculiarly helpful, in these later years of her life, to the girls of that school.

"Oct. 16.—It's such a trial to room with Sue Marston; not because she is so bad, but because she is so strong-willed and determined. She has such a way of meeting serious things with a kind of ridicule which makes them seem what they are not. She must have seen only the shallow or gloomy side of religion, so she is not so much to be blamed as pitied. I try to keep in mind what Miss Fiske said to some of us once about being willing to room with girls who were not the

ones we wanted with us: 'You know, dear girls, what a great work you think it is to bring a heathen soul into the light; but is it not just as much to help one of your own land come to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus? If you can't have the friends whose society you enjoy, for room-mates, comfort yourselves by thinking that you may gain more through the exercise of patience and self-denial than you could through friendship, and if you live true Christian lives you have an opportunity, as perhaps you may never have again, to be preachers of righteousness to those who know nothing of the blessedness of such a life.'

"Oct. 28.—Sue came rushing in to-night, threw her books on the bed, and burst out, 'I hate this place! It's just as I expected! I can't endure so much goodness! It's just awful—being with so many pious folks, all bent on making every one else so too. I'm not going to be a Christian,' she continued, 'and they needn't try to make me. I said when I came here I wasn't going to be coaxed into religion, and I'm not, so there! I don't want to be solemn as an owl. I like fun and nonsense too well for anything of the kind.'

"'Are the people here very solemn?' I ventured to ask. 'It's not what people seem, but

what they are,' she answered, after waiting a moment for something to support her theory, which she well knows does not verify itself here. 'I despise shams. All good people are alike at the bottom, I suppose, and when they look smiling and sweet and happy it's just put on, I know. Now, there's Deacon Drew, always talking about his sins, and being a poor miserable worm of the dust—I never heard him say anything else in prayer-meeting. I go to meeting when I'm at home, because mother says I must to keep up appearances. I often wish there could be an explosion of some kind to wake people up. When Gabriel's trumpet sounds I hope I shall be in a prayer-meeting, just to see how people talk when they speak the truth.'

"‘I suppose you are quite sure you'll say just the right thing under the circumstances,' I said, laughing.

"‘I don't suppose I should say anything, for I don't make any pretensions to goodness. Those who know, say that Deacon Drew isn't any better than he should be—that he is awful quick-tempered and spiteful, and can't bear to be reminded of it. He never mentions that in prayer-meeting. His confessions are always so general no one could take him up if he wanted to.'

“‘But Deacon Drew isn’t the only one who speaks in your prayer-meeting, is he?’

“‘Oh, no; there’s Dr. Jones, who is always up in the seventh heaven, so he thinks—he is always smiling and telling how happy he is, and how he is never troubled with doubt or fear; but I’d rather hear Deacon Drew’s doleful speeches than his fine talk, for it’s all gas. His wife and children look as if he had all the happiness in the family, and it’s a positive fact that he makes them eat gruel for breakfast,—because it’s more healthy, he says,—but because it’s cheaper than beefsteak and potatoes, is the real reason. He sings louder than anybody else, at the missionary meetings, about sending the blessed gospel to earth’s remotest bound, but I guess, if no one gave any more than he does, it would never get outside of his own door—nor inside of it either, for that matter.’

“Sue says all this in such a droll, hearty way I can’t help laughing, and perhaps it’s the best thing to do till she comes to feel the honesty of a real Christian life, as she must feel it if she stays here long. I wonder why it is that the inconsistencies and pretenses of religion seem so bad; perhaps it’s because the real thing is so very consistent and beautiful.

“Nov. 5.—Sue has heard to-day that Miss

Fiske is coming to-morrow and a company of returned missionaries with her. There is great delight among those who know that Miss Fiske is expected, and our expressions of pleasure stirred her up to give an expression of her opinion concerning missionaries in general, after this manner: 'I heard before I came here, that it would be all missionaries and heathen, and now there's a whole batch of them coming; for my part I'd rather see a lot of real hungry cannibals.'

" 'I guess you'd want to keep well out of their way, though,' Alice said, with a laugh.

" 'Oh, they wouldn't touch me. I'm not the kind they relish. I suppose your good missionaries will talk to us in such a dreadful way about the poor benighted heathen, we shall all feel that it's wicked to wear a single pretty ribbon, and that we ought to give up all our little trinkets and put them in the missionary box. I always felt like dressing in black when I went to a missionary meeting at home, and leaving every bright thing behind me.'

" 'I think you'll change your way of thinking when you see Miss Fiske,' Alice said; 'her way of dressing seems to me the most perfect I have ever seen; its purity and softness are just like her. You'll see that she thinks it quite right to wear ribbons and lace.'

“ ‘Then she’s different from the missionaries I’ve seen. They always look as if they had renounced the flesh literally, and all the comforts of this wicked world. Then what’s the use of sending missionaries to the heathen, at all?’ Sue persisted. ‘If they are to be saved, they will be, according to our way of thinking, and we can’t help or hinder it. I think it would be better to try to save some of the heathen at home. Here I’ve had the gospel all my life, and I’m no nearer the kingdom than the veriest Feejee Islander.’

“ ‘But you have the light and it’s your own choice if you remain in darkness,’ Allie said.

“ ‘There’s just where the trouble comes in. I’m to be condemned because I have the light, and they are to be condemned because they haven’t it. When I can see the common sense of religion I’ll accept it, and not till then. I never could see how one could be blamed for what he didn’t know anything about. No more can I see any justice in punishing us for what Adam and Eve did hundreds of years ago. I always rebel against the doctrine taught in that angular poetry of the catechism:

In Adam’s fall,
We sinned all.

I said to my teacher, once, when I was a little bit of a girl, that I didn't think it was just the thing to punish any body for what somebody else did, and she said I was a very naughty girl to talk so, and I've never found any one since who could explain, with any show of reason, how we are responsible for Adam's sin.'

"The bell rang just then. I guess it was just as well it did, for I don't think any thing we could say would have helped her much. Poor Sue! she is groping blindly among the hard questions that have troubled so many, instead of coming into the simple way, so full of light, that Jesus has made plain to us. I am convinced that talking to her will do her no good. If our lives and our prayers can't help her, nothing else that we can do, will.

"Nov. 7.—Last night there was a perfect buzz of delight when it was known that Miss Fiske had come, and all eyes were turned to No. 3, where she sat, smiling on us. It seemed as if there was a richer volume of song at devotions, and a tenderer hush in the prayer that followed. I do believe her very presence inspires us. Sue met her in the hall this morning, and confessed that she received a 'breezy good morning.' Her face betrayed her thought, 'I'm afraid I shall like her.'

"Dec. 20.—How strange it seems; this coming on of the holidays and the spirit of gladness quite gone from me. I think how different it all was in the festal days of other years. We had *her*, so warm and loving and happy, for she was happy in her suffering. In our cozy, bright rooms, she was the one thing brightest and most beautiful, and to-night the lovely form is hidden away by chilling snows. I am jealous of the cold, white snow, of the starlight and the moonbeams; they are nearer her than I can be. O, my God! the dreary, dreary spaces that lie between my soul and hers. I thought I should never lose the sweet calm that fell upon me through the open heavens when she entered in. I thought I should feel always her gentle presence near me, soothing my bitter grief, as in the first sad but blessed hours of sorrow. But these duties, these cares, these monotonies of every day life, how they come between us and divine things. How they hinder and draw us away from spiritual communion. I wonder if life will ever again be other than a dreary loneliness. Allie loaned me these verses of Mary Blair's to-day. I wonder she doesn't write more. I am going to copy them, for they speak the hungry yearning of my heart to-night.

"A FEELING OF SADNESS AND LONGING."

"There's a small, silent chamber,
Close walled by roof-tree low,
And over its blessed sleeper
Lies folded the sheltering snow.

The snow so soft and so tender,
That nurseth the violet's root.
O'er the poor, pale flowers of our human
It creepeth with trembling foot.

And e'er in that small still chamber,
My heart, o'er tired, craveth rest,
With a long, low sobbing and yearning
That will not be repressed.

Oh, is it the earth, my mother,
That calleth so gently to me?
"Come rest on my veiling bosom
That kindly opens to thee."

Oh, is it thy whisper, beloved,
Who late to its shelter hast flown,
That stirreth the brooding silence
With a low, love-labored moan?

At thy strong and sweet compelling,
Like the moon's charm on the sea,
All the tide of my soul is setting
Oh! loved and lost, to thee.

My bowed heart, nearer and nearer
Is drawn to the couches three,
Where thy loved and mine are low lying,
Side by side, dear sleeper, with thee.

And I know that each fair, still chamber,
Love tenanted, is peace;
And its windows ope to a sunrise
That never can darken or cease.

But pardon and pity me, Savior;
Faith vainly her pinions would wave:
My soul with her tears is too heavy
To rise o'er the lid of the grave.

"This last verse is my prayer to-night.

"Dec. 27.—I wonder if God really knows, really cares, when the sunshine all goes out of one's life. Is it not for the *great, grand* plan he cares, and not *each* individual life? I feel it slipping away from me; the beautiful, heavenly past which binds me to my mother. Does she love me still? Can she know? Every little childish hurt or trouble was doubly hers—how is it now? I thought I should never doubt concerning this. I felt so sure that she came to me after she died.

"All day these words of Mrs. Browning's have kept repeating themselves over and over again:

"Are souls straight so happy that, dizzy with Heaven,
They drop earth's affection, conceive not of woe?"

How I should like to ask some one here about this great mystery, but I dare not; it might shatter all my hope, so I keep it hid in my heart.

"Dec. 30.—'For he knoweth our frame; he *remembereth* that we are dust,' and with a father's tender pity, he has sent to me a comforter. I accept it as a new token of his loving kindness. Last evening I went into the reading room, because I was so lonely I couldn't do anything else, and I wanted to get away from Sue's nonsense. Miss Fiske was there. I suppose

she noticed I was sorrowful, for after a few moments I felt her arm around me and she said softly, 'I know all about it, dear,' and then she drew me into her own room, and we talked about this strange, sweet, spiritual mystery till far into the night.

" 'You really believe our friends know and care about us, and are near us?' I asked eagerly.

" 'I haven't a doubt of it, dear. It isn't likely they know any less in heaven than when here upon the earth. Do you suppose your mother could forget you in her happiness? Would it be like her? I suppose it is only the flesh that hides the spiritual world from our sight just now. That there are times when we look into heaven itself, even in the body, I must believe.' Then she told me of an experience of her own; how, after a long and severe illness she lay at the point of death, with closed eyes and lips, not able to give one sign of intelligence. Her friends gathered around her, using every means to rouse her from what they feared was a mortal stupor. She heard them say one to the other, 'She is not conscious; she does not hear or know any thing that we do;' and all this time heaven lay before her in beatific vision. She saw the angelic hosts, glorious beyond description, and heard the celestial harmonies, enchanting

beyond human conception. So absorbed was she in her ecstasy of rapture, that her only thought toward earth was, 'Oh! if they would only let me go.' She felt she must stay the hands of those who loved her—that she could not be kept from entering in. When at length the efforts of friends had restored her physical power sufficiently for speech, her first words were spoken to her father, who bent over her. 'Oh! why did you bring me back?' 'Heaven has been real to me ever since,' she said.

"After she had finished telling of this, she said, 'I have told this experience to only two or three, for I fear it might not be understood. I feel about it as you do about believing that your mother came back to comfort you, and is still near you. I don't want to lose the comfort it brings me even by the shadow of any one's doubt concerning it. When I die, it will be in the ordinary way. I have seen heaven once in the flesh, and I don't expect to see it again till I am really there.'

"Then she told me how, years after, when her father, whom she tenderly loved, had gone to his heavenly home, in the school at Oroomiah, they were in great trouble—hard-pressed by foes without and discouragement within. She lay down one night well-nigh worn

out and sorely perplexed. In her sleep, she seemed to be on the edge of a river, deep and turbulent; looking across it, she saw on the other side green banks, bright with sunlight, and standing in the brightness, her father, serene and beautiful. As she reached out her hands toward him, he spoke to her across the water: 'There are no enemies here, my child.' She awoke from her sleep refreshed in body, and so comforted by the forecasting of the heavenly rest that she was strengthened and enabled to endure patiently the severe trial through which she was passing. I think I shall never forget last night. The room—simple, but warm and cheery,—the fire-light, glowing brightly at first, then flickering and dying till only the gray ashes remained, the stillness in house,—the winter storm beating against the windows,—Miss Fiske talking softly, in her face a kind of tender, reverent joyfulness. The dear Lord has sent his angel, who has rolled away the stone that was settling down so heavily over my heart. I will try to thank him in my life.

"Jan. 15.—All through the days of the new year which I dreaded so much, I have been finding peace in believing, not alone the thing I so much desired, but that God loves me, and that he will do the best for me and mine.

Ever since my talk with Miss Fiske, I have felt so different; before that I was often troubled about this matter. I wanted so much to know surely. I fancy if one had told me my mother was not able to come to me, I should have rebelled against the very thought. Now, though I am so much surer that she can help me, and that God means that I should find comfort in this, I am willing to leave it with him. And if it were not so, I think I could bear it, because there must be some good reason why. I am coming to understand a little some words of Madame Guyon's I came across to-day: 'Ah, if you knew what peace there is in an accepted sorrow.'

" March 22.—We are in the midst of spring examinations. Of course we are all feeling anxious to do well. Miss Fiske's morning lesson was most quieting and sympathetic. She said: ' If you have done your best through term time, you have no reason to feel troubled now. Some of you have been hindered by ill-health—some by caring for a sick classmate—some by being obliged to do extra work to help pay the expense of being here, and you may not do yourselves justice in these examinations; but remember, the Lord Jesus sees not as we see; he regards the inward

motive, the honest effort; he knows every hindrance, measures all natural ability, and his approval, his congratulation, may come most warmly where every other is withheld. Twenty years from now it will matter not so much whether you did finely in Virgil or Euclid as whether you maintained a humble and cheerful spirit under failure or success. I think oftentimes there is more danger in our success than in our failure. We must guard against undue confidence and exultation, when successful, and undue depression and disappointment, when we have the opposite to bear. The real responsibility lies back of this time, in your faithfulness or unfaithfulness every day of the months that are past. Some of you are tired of study. Some are timid and sensitive by nature. Now, there is just One who understands each individual want, who can help you better than any other. Lean on him; look to him for courage and strength. This is just the time when he wants you to rest in him; he will give you quietness and confidence.'

"Then she told us this experience of her own: 'At one time I was very much worn out with care and labor. One Sabbath I went to Geog Tapa with Mr. Stoddard. It was afternoon, and I was seated on a mat in

the middle of the earthen floor of the church. I had already attended Sabbath-school and a prayer-meeting with my pupils, and weary, I longed for rest. It seemed as if I could not sit without support through the service. Then I remembered that after that came my meeting with the women readers of the village, and O, how desirable seemed rest! But God sent it in an unexpected way, for a woman came and seated herself directly behind me so that I could lean on her, and invited me to do so. I declined, but she drew me back, saying, "If you love me, lean hard." Very refreshing was that support. And then came the Master's own voice repeating the words, "If you love me, lean hard." And I leaned on him, too, feeling that, through that poor woman, he had spoken to me. I was rested long before the service was through. Then I spent an hour with the women, and after service rode six miles to my own home. I wondered that I was not weary that night or the next morning, and I have rested so often in those sweet words, "If you love me, lean hard." My dear girls, take these words to each one of your hearts to-day and through all days of care and anxiety.'

"May 26.—Miss Fiske spoke to us yesterday, of the Christian life and its beauty and

richness when lived as Christ meant it should be. 'That your natural disposition is at war with what is holy and gentle and pure, is no excuse for leading selfish, unholy lives, for his grace is sufficient for every soul, whatever it may lack of native goodness. The greater the need, the greater will be the help given. The fruit of the Spirit is nowhere seen so plainly as in those very characters whose natural tendencies are opposite to what the gospel of peace teaches us must be found in his true followers. The fiery John becomes the gentle, loving disciple. So much so, that many seem to think he was always such. St. Paul, the high-handed persecutor, becomes the faithful witness, even in his bonds, of the lowly Jesus he once despised. It is not enough that we follow Christ. It must be such close following that his robe of righteousness shall cover our natural deformity.

“God has brought many of you together, with varying dispositions from different homes, and you will find much need of his grace to make you kind and patient and forbearing with one another. Some of you haven't the room-mates you would have chosen, nor the rooms you like. Oh, that you may have the blessed spirit of Jesus so fully in your souls, that you will indeed be careful, not so much for your own

happiness as that of others, that you may be kindly affectioned one toward another, in honor preferring one another. There was once a lovely Christian girl in this school who had the love of all our hearts and deserved the best that we could give. There was one room in the building particularly dark and unpleasant, and when the rooms were assigned, the principal gave this to her, and when questioned concerning it, she answered: "I can give M—any room, no matter how ugly; she will make it beautiful. She carries sunshine and beauty with her everywhere."

"There was a look on Sue's face while Miss Fiske was talking, such as I have never seen before. She has been growing thoughtful of late, in spite of her determination to the contrary. Though she tried to turn the morning lesson into a joke, by saying, 'That's what I call making virtue its own reward, with a vengeance,' I am sure she is dropping her giddy way of talking about serious things, and is really thinking more of them than she will let us know.

"Later:—When I came up from recess meeting this evening I found Sue sitting by the open window, her head on her hand, looking straight out into the moonlight. It is a lovely night, and at first I thought she was only

watching the shifting light and shade upon the mountains, or the white mist creeping up the valley. But when she lifted her head I saw tears shining upon her cheeks, and she said hurriedly and almost in a whisper, 'It means something—this Christian life—but what, I shall never find out, it's all a dark blank to me.' There was a kind of despair in her voice, and I knew that what I had guessed in the weeks past, was true. She had no longer power to stifle her spiritual convictions. The singing that came to her as she sat in the stillness, from one and another of the little groups gathered for prayer, must have touched her heart. But no words of mine could make her feel that there was any part or lot in this life for her. She seemed to grope helplessly in the thick darkness. I realized how a careless levity and a habit of trifling with serious things, harden the heart and make difficult the acceptance of truth. God grant that the blessed light may speedily break in upon her soul.

"May 28.—The lesson of this morning seemed meant just for Sue. Miss Fiske dwelt mostly upon the words of Moses, spoken to the children of Israel after he had told them how the Lord would scatter them among all nations on account of their sins: 'But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord, thy God, thou shalt

find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.' She made it plain, that we could no more obtain spiritual good without earnest effort than temporal. He who would find the kingdom of God and enjoy its blessings, must, in the first place, seek for it as for hid treasure, and then be constantly striving to know more and more of its exhaustless riches. I couldn't help watching Sue, who listened intently with the light of a fixed purpose in her face, which means victory and peace for her. She never does any thing by halves, and I am quite sure she will be a strong, decided Christian, if she is one at all.

"June 20.—The lesson this morning was full of kindly sympathy and help. Burden-bearing was the subject. Miss Fiske speaks out of a real experience which makes her words weighty. How much she has known of bearing the burdens of others. Sometimes in repose, her face has an expression of tender, pitying sadness which makes me think of him who bore the griefs and carried the sorrows of the world. But when she speaks of the Master and his work, it is full of brightness.

"June 26.—I can only guess the conflicts Sue has in trying to lead a Christian life, for she is very quietly determined about it. Last evening, in section meeting, she repeated these

verses from the hymn 'Fighting the Battle of Life':

" 'Fighting alone to-night,
With what a sinking heart!
Lord Jesus, in the fight,
Oh, stand not thou apart.

There is nothing left of me,—
If all my strength were told,
So small the amount would be,
Its presence could scarce be known.

Lord, I would fain be still
And quiet behind my shield;
But make me *love* thy will,
For fear I should ever yield.

Even as now my hands,
So doth my folded will,
Lie waiting thy commands
Without one anxious thrill.

But, as with sudden pain,
My hands unfold and clasp,
So doth my will start up again
And take its old firm grasp.

Lord, fix my eyes on thee,
And fill my heart with thy love,
And keep my soul till the shadows flee,
And the light breaks forth above.'

"How much it told, not only of contest, but of real comprehension of the Christian life.

"July 18.—The house is full of fragrance and beauty. Seminary Hall is a bower of loveliness,—so cool and woodsy. The white pillars are twined with green; baskets and vases of exquisite moss, ferns and flowers are put in every possible place. The morning was delic-

iously clear and breezy—delicate, fleecy clouds drifting over the tender blue of the sky. In the midst of this perfume and loveliness, Miss Fiske talked to us of the new life upon which we were so soon to enter. From the ferns and the wild flowers she drew a lesson:

“‘Most of you will return to quiet homes; strive to be like these pure-hearted children of the woods that grow so beautifully in still places,—just as beautifully whether seen or not. Grow like them, dear girls. Do your best wherever you are; no matter how humble your work, give to it your highest powers. If God wants you for any larger field, he will certainly let you know. Help lighten the burden of your mothers; smooth the way for younger and tenderer feet; there can be no more blessed work than this. Carry into your homes the sunshine of a helpful, cheerful spirit. Some of you are to be teachers—remember how grand and honorable is such labor, and how great the responsibility of those who deal with immortal minds. Do not attempt this unless you love the work, for of all others it requires earnestness and honesty. No matter where you may teach, if in some obscure school-house by the dusty wayside, do not forget that your work is sacred. Only by regarding it as such can you render a worthy account to the Master.

“ ‘Do not be afraid of great responsibilities. If God calls you to a work which requires strength, courage, wisdom, he will help you perform it. Remember always that it is his strength, not your own, upon which you must rely. Only when we forget ourselves and rest upon him can we render the highest service. Take with you the assurance of Him who loves us all, “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” ’ ”

“ Then we sang,

“ ‘Everlasting arms of love,
Are beneath, around, above.’ ”

SAINT EUNICE.

"And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—*Epistle of John*.

"You will find a visit to her well worth the trouble. I wish every disheartened, fretful Christian could take lessons of this poor, bed-ridden saint."

So said an old, white-haired minister—a friend of ours.

One hot, July morning we set out to find this woman of whom he had told us. Down Main Street, with its gay windows and its throng of hurrying people, far to the south, where the street grows crowded and dingy, and the air close and unwholesome, we found the number and made our way up the untidy stairs. Dirty, half-clothed children stared at us; gaunt-looking women peered out of the door-ways. There were so many occupants of this floor, I wondered how many inches each one could call his own.

"Third door to the right. Knock, an' she'll open for yer," said a not unkindly voice in answer to our inquiries.

The door opened quickly and without noise, at our lightest tap. We expected to meet some

face on the threshold, but saw none. On a small bed in one corner lay the woman we sought.

How shall I describe her and her surroundings? At first sight, before I could catch the beauty of her face, I thought how dismal this kind of life must be. I felt like getting out into the street again as soon as possible.

There was a cooking-stove in the room, and a chair by the head of the bed, with tumblers, a bowl of broth, fruit, and a glass tube. The door was opened by a string tied to the latch and fastened to a rod which she pulled with the hand not paralyzed. This we had known before we came—that by a paralytic shock some years before, one half of her body had been rendered helpless; she could not utter a syllable; all her nourishment was taken in liquid form through a glass tube. We had known all this, but actual contact with disease and suffering is quite different from hearing about them. Her head was bound with a handkerchief, but beneath it such serene eyes looked up to greet me that the gloom I had felt creeping over me was dispelled at once. She smiled brightly and motioned us to seats. I have never seen before or since, just such a face. It bore the marks of intense suffering, and yet was so divinely joyous in its expression that we felt in looking at her

that she had, indeed, gained what her name signified—"happy victory."

I no longer wondered that the aged minister loved to visit her, and couldn't help thinking if Raphael had seen such a face he might have given the world a more spiritual Madonna.

We gave her the flowers we had brought. She nodded a sunny "Thank you," and wrote on a slate that lay beside her, "God's work—I love them."

After a few common-place questions, to which she wrote cheery answers, we felt we could ask her anything. The following conversation, so far as I can remember, passed between us:

"Do you suffer much?"

"Every moment. This pain in my head never leaves me night or day."

"Are you willing to lie here and suffer?"

"It is God's will. He knows best; I am in his hand."

"How can you be so bright and cheerful?"

"I am an heir of the kingdom;" and with a rapturous smile she pointed to a Daily Comforter hanging upon the wall open at these words: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared

with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8: 17, 18.)

Again she wrote: "I have an inheritance, and am already entered in. It is all through grace."

"Have you always been so happy?"

"Oh, no; I had my conflict; God gave me the victory. Five years I have lived in the sunlight. I am happy in his love."

We went out into the hot, hurried street, feeling quieted and uplifted. We had, indeed, been ministered unto, and like the prophet of old to whom the angel brought bread and water under the lonely juniper tree, we felt we should go in the strength of this spiritual feast many a day. The power that sustained this sufferer in the midst of poverty and pain, seemed so real, so tangible, that it made me ashamed of ever being impatient or faint-hearted.

That evening, as we sat in the twilight talking of this woman, one who walks beside me in earthly ways, but who is far in advance in spiritual things, said, "I have been thinking how much this one victory means to each of us who is a Christian, no matter how little we comprehend the fullness and richness of attainment possible in such a life. If there were only one such experience in the world, it would

prove that God can and does give full rest and peace in his love even here."

"But," I said, "there are so many unhappy, doubting Christians."

"That proves nothing against the possibilities of Christian attainment," she interrupted. "I believe we should take God literally at his word when he says, 'My grace is sufficient for you.' That we do not lay hold of his promises and verify them in our actual life, is no sign that we can not. The fault lies in us, not in him, or his provisions of grace. Another thing: You know how thoroughly simple and childlike this saint—for such we must call her—seemed. There was not a shadow of sanctimoniousness about her, not a suspicion that she imagined any credit due her for her patience and serene joyousness. I don't believe she knows anything about the doctrine of perfection, as it is generally held. I am often reminded of what Father S—— once said about this: 'Any one can attain perfection whose standard is *low* enough.' That is just the trouble; those who have a clear spiritual vision, I must believe, see such heights and depths of heavenly things that at their best estate they feel how much lies beyond them. Those Christians who have the truest insight concerning these divine truths, are, I am sure, the hum-

blest—the least conscious that they possess superior power or wisdom.”

“How do you reconcile her situation with God’s promises of love and tenderness to those who trust and honor him?” I asked. “This saint, so lonely and so helpless, is left to suffer in a poor, close room with such unpleasant surroundings. Now if I could, I would go straight to this sufferer and set her down in the fairest spot in the world. God can do this—why doesn’t he?”

“Ah!” she answered, smiling, “it’s not his way. The meekest souls often bear the heaviest burdens; the noblest spirits are subjected to the pettiest vexation and fret; the gentlest, most refined natures are often surrounded by those who are coarse and rasping in the highest degree; and he who is the source of all love, and pity, and tenderness, just *seems* to look on and not care. In this very fact I find the greatest comfort and ground for hope. It means far more than we can think—this reticence of a loving Father towards his suffering children. We know what we would do if we had the power, and all our love and pity and tenderness are drawn from him; it could not have been in us without first being in him. More than this, all the strongest, sweetest love and pity of the world’s best and loveliest are not

to be compared with the heart of infinite love. You know what God's own Word says: 'If thou seest the oppression of the poor and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.' Just because people do not get their deserts here, because the good suffer and the wicked prosper materially, because there is this mystery of affliction, do we know surely that there must be a reckoning time coming that will vindicate truth and purity and make righteousness victorious. When I look on such lovely saints enduring grievous affliction, I realize how exceeding must be the weight of glory awaiting them up yonder."

"How about answers to prayer?" I asked.

"You know, she said she had had her struggle; most likely she prayed for health. There are said to be cases of physical healing in these days in answer to prayer."

"In regard to these I'm sure I can't speak," she replied. "I see no reason why there might not be such instances. Some say it is not God's way of working now, and this is certainly true in a general sense; but it might be the way in which he would choose to work in particular cases, for all that. To me it would not seem half as wonderful a miracle to restore this par-

alyzed woman to health as to do what has been done for her—give her grace to endure without murmur or question this constant pain and privation. Indeed, the wonderful thing is to feel that the *same* tenderness and love withholds as grants our heart's desire. You know it is said of St. Theresa that she prayed unanswered and without enjoyment for twenty years, yet she did not for a day cease praying. A lovely young Christian wrote concerning her perseverance: 'That of all her triumphs is the one that most overcomes me. I can not approach her constancy.' It is trusting God, clinging to him hopefully at all hazards, that proves the strength of our faith, and gives the true evidence of spiritual power."

"It seems so sad," I couldn't help saying, "when it is possible, that so few of us ever reach this vigorous spiritual healthfulness."

"More than you think, dear," she replied, quickly. "I am quite sure the saint we found to-day is not the brightest by many hundreds, if we only knew where to look for them. And then so many more are coming so nearer the true life every day. I have a little poem written by a young friend of mine in the stillness and suffering of a sick room, which at least has the forecasting of a victory as beauti-

ful as that we have witnessed to-day. I must read it to you:

“SHADOWS.

“In the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.”

I laughed in the sunlight !
Then a shadow crept over my brightness ;
As it slowly moved along
I hushed the glee in my happy heart,
I silenced my joyous song ;
Then I prayed that the gloomy shade might pass
On the other side of me ;
Yet, e'en as I prayed, it entered my heart
And brooded there silently.

I sit in the shadow !
Still broodeth it there, but I lose my fears
In the song my glad heart sings ;
For the cloud that I prayed might pass me by,
Was the shadow of his wings.
I was only startled with sudden fear,
As a dreamy bird might be,
When the shade of the brooding mother wing
Folds over it silently.

Now love I the shadow !
For it's so he hath given me stillness ;
The still sweet hush at his feet.
From his lips I am learning life's lessons ;
Softly the words I repeat,
And the joy of a wondering spirit
That is touched with love divine,
With a love, flowing out from the fullness
Of the “Fountain of Love,” is mine.

I wait in thy shadow !
For I fear lest the breaking of stillness
That seemeth so sweet, may be
But the rushing in of tempest-tossed waves
To drift me away from thee.
So restfully bide I beneath thy wings,
Clasping thy dear hand in mine,
And whisper, “O heart ! God's sunlight is sweet,
But his shadow is divine.”

Cling thou to his shadow .
'Tis the mystery of his still presence,
Touch of his tender caress ;
Grace of the fashion of measureless love,
Clothed in invisibleness.
Gather it unto thee, fold upon fold,
'Twill cover thy dreary sin,
And one day thou'lt waken to find, dear heart,
Thou'st gathered a blessing in.' "

When she had finished, I thought of what Carlyle says in his essay on Dante: "Thought, true labor of any kind, highest virtue itself, is it not the daughter of Pain? Born out of the black whirlwind! In all ways we are to become perfect through suffering." And then of the divine words of our great Captain in this fight of affliction: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

In our subsequent visits to this lovely saint, we always found her the same, and it is the testimony of all those whom I have met who knew her, that her life was filled with a constant, abiding joy. Her perfect naturalness grew upon me as I became better acquainted with her. We asked her once if she would not rather be in a more quiet street. She pulled open the slats of the blind with her stick, and pointing to a cross street, which is one of the fine avenues of the city, wrote, "I can see the fashions." She seemed thoroughly imbued

with a spirit that was determined to forget the bitter and to extract all the comfort and sweetness possible in everything.

A change was planned for her by some kind hearted ladies who were in the habit of visiting her, and the last time I saw her they were getting her ready to be taken into the country. She accepted this unexpected pleasure with a child-like eagerness delightful to witness. A lady brought her a new dress with soft ruffles for the neck and wrists, and a pretty bow to match. She seemed as pleased as if she were a young lady in perfect health, and wrote laughingly on her slate. "You'll make me vain." She had been asked to write out a list of articles she might need while away; only a spool of thread and some other little things as trifling were asked for. A lady, anticipating her wants, supplied her liberally. She seemed surprised and delighted, and wrote: "You've got just what I wanted. Did the Lord tell you about these things?"

I never learned how it fared with her on this visit, as I left the city soon after, myself; but whenever I think of that busy, crowded street, a serene, beautiful face seems to lighten its dusty tumult, and I am glad to have known this victory of faith.

MRS. JANE PITHEY, THE FAITHFUL WITNESS.

"Say, what is prayer, where it is prayer indeed?
The mighty utterance of a mighty need.
That soul is praying, who doth press with might
Out of his darkness into heaven's own light."

"And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."—ST. MATTHEW.

The world has of late been agitated with the discussion of prayer, its nature and its results. As in all else involving the supernatural, the evidence concerning it is largely internal rather than external. No thinking person will deny that there are many spiritual experiences which lie without the realm of positive demonstration, so that it would be no cause for discomfort to Christians if there were not, neither could be, tangible and positive proof of answered prayer. That there is such proof which even the most unbelieving can not gainsay, must ever be a source of comfort and encouragement to those who still in the main "walk by faith and not by sight."

Just here in our busy, tumultuous Chicago lives a saint whose prayers, not only for spiritual but for material needs, are daily answered. She belongs to that royal company, the Lord's poor. Her home is in an obscure alley. She owns the

small house in which she lives ; aside from this she has no means of support and no earthly friend upon whom she has the claim of relationship. Quite helpless and dependent, this aged saint, her feeble hands shaking with palsy, but with a spirit of confident assurance, is a more convincing answer to Professor Tyndall and his school than the most brilliant arguments of the profoundest theologians or the most learned philosophers. The theories and speculations of skeptics, be they never so subtle and far-reaching, vanish like mere threads of gossamer in the presence of this living witness, not of God's abstract power, but of his actual care for his believing children. This gracious gift of trust and reliance upon God which she has had for eight years, seems indeed a most wonderful thing. During all these years she has been a sufferer ; wearisome days and nights have been appointed unto her. She has been surrounded by circumstances discouraging in the highest degree, and yet never once has she lost the assurance of faith.

I said to her, one morning, after a night of extreme suffering, " You can trust him just the same as if he had sent you a night of quiet rest ?"

" Oh, yes ! Sometimes when I am racked with pain Satan would fain becloud my vision,

and make me think God does not love me or he would not let me suffer so; but, blessed be his name! there has never been a moment when I could not say, 'I know he loves me;' when I could not rest in his love as a child in the arms of its mother. Though he slay me yet will I trust in him, and I am sure he will keep me to the end; not even Satan can pluck me out of his hand."

What more precious gift could be bestowed upon any spirit, still in the flesh, than this triumph over mortal anguish? It is pain's furnace blast that consumes the dross and proves the pure gold of faith and patience. Can we doubt that such a spiritual conquest is the highest possible attainment, and that it should be accepted as the clearest manifestation of God's working in us through his grace? Still there is a class of minds who will not, and perhaps can not, comprehend such evidence, and to such the answer of this saint's prayers for material aid will seem more wonderful.

I have taken no pains to gather a large number of such answers, as a few can stand for many, and shall simply mention such as have been made known to me indirectly through personal intercourse with Mrs. Pithey. That there may be many others more marked is very likely, and such a life may justify a more ex-

tended notice, but for the purpose of this little sketch the few will suffice.

Eight years ago her husband was suddenly taken from her by death. In his pocket were two twenty-five cent pieces. These were all the funds left her. Both her aged mother and herself were well-nigh helpless and without means of support. She said: "There was no one to whom I could look for help. I was utterly and entirely dependent upon the Lord, but I felt sure he would take care of us, and in some way provide for our wants."

While thus looking to the Lord for help, a woman called to see her, and gave her an envelope containing a five dollar bill, saying it was money she had saved for the Lord's use. From that time to this, her wants have been supplied. When she has needed anything she has asked the Lord for it, and he has always sent it. At one time a woman had come to do her washing; there was only a scuttleful of coal in the house. The girl who took care of her said, after prayer in the morning, "You forgot to ask for the coal." She supplemented her prayer with a request for the needed coal, and very soon after a load came from a gentlemen who had no means of knowing her immediate need; and still a little later some one else came to inquire if she was out of wood and kind-

lings. During a severe winter she had been without money for several days, and was feeling that she could not much longer do without it. A gentleman from out of town called on her. He said to her, "Are you quite sure the Lord will never forsake you?" She said he little thought how much that "never" meant to her who had not a penny to supply her need, but from her heart she could answer, "I am sure he never will." When the gentleman said good-by he left a ten-dollar bill in her hand. One day when I was calling on her, she said, "The taxes must be paid on my house in a few days. I've no idea where the money is coming from, but it will surely come. 'The gold and silver are mine, saith the Lord.'" The next time I saw her, she said, "I must tell you how the money for the taxes came. It didn't come till the very night before they had to be paid. I thought I must tell the Lord about it again, and just then some one came to the door and inquired if Mrs. Pithey was in. Of course it must have been a stranger," she added, with a smile, "or she would have known that I am never out. She handed the girl an envelope, and inside was twenty dollars—more than enough for my need. There was no name nor anything to show from whom it came."

Another time she wanted money for repairs

on the roof of her house, and the exact sum needed just came in time from Kansas. One sultry morning a member of our family took her a box of grapes. "Oh!" she exclaimed, when she saw them, "that's just what I've been wanting. I couldn't eat any breakfast this morning."

"Did you ask for them?"

"No. I never specify in regard to luxuries. The Lord knew that I had need of them."

Here was a saint living in such close communion with her heavenly Father that her every wish was regarded and answered by him.

Not long ago there was a fire in her street. Several houses were burned, and her own was in danger of taking fire any time. She said, "The people came running in and asking, 'Ain't you dreadful frightened, Mrs. Pithey? What will you do if the fire gets to your house?' But I was not in the least disturbed. The Lord kept me in perfect peace. I knew he would take care of me."

This little event showed the effect of a true Christian life wherever lived. The people around her are rough and unlearned, for the most part Catholics, but they were very kind that night, thinking of her, even though their own houses were in danger. One man sent

word that if the fire came to her house he had his express wagon all ready to come and get her. I always feel when I visit her that she beautifies, nay, glorifies, the dirty, crowded alley by her holy living.

In no way does her situation separate her from sympathy with the world and its wants. She has the deepest interest in the temperance reform of the present time. In speaking of it the other day she said, "It is the Lord's work. How I should love to be actively engaged in it." All beautiful things delight her. Flowers and plants are received with a kind of eager satisfaction. She said once, "This is a beautiful world. I remember how it used to look." A lady called on her, dressed very prettily in white; a year after she spoke of her dress, and said, "How nice she looked." Are we not inclined to think it matters little how we dress when we visit the sick and poor? This incident proves the contrary.

It is delightful to talk with this aged saint. Her language is most simple and full of Bible promises, which are verities to her. Speaking of the noise in the street, she said, "I hear it, but it does not disturb the *inward* calm. I rest in the Lord." Another time she said, "Oh, the riches of his grace! Christ in us the hope of glory—what a blessed hope! Even here, eye

hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. What will it be hereafter?"

Speaking of the friends that had already entered in, and the hope she had that they might still be able to visit and comfort us, she added, "We know that Christ is with us, for we have his promise, 'I will come to you.'"

Her appreciation of kindness, and thankfulness for the smallest attentions are almost pathetic. She seems never weary of speaking of the dear friends God has raised up for her; particularly does she express gratitude for the kindness of Dr. Shipman, who for so many years has visited her every other day when possible for him to do so. She, in return, carried on her heart his benevolent enterprise—the "Foundlings' Home." Doubtless it is largely owing to her prayers that such marked success has crowned this generous effort.

Dependent as she is in her extreme helplessness, she has need oftentimes to exercise patience and forbearance toward those who have the care of her, nor is it strange if they sometimes lack gentleness. At one time she did not seem to have the kind care she needed, but no word of complaint came from her. A while afterward we noticed that a motherly, kind-

hearted woman had taken the place of the girl who had formerly taken care of her. In the course of our conversation one day, she spoke of the matter and the unkindness she had received. I said, "Why didn't you tell some one about it?" She said, "I did at last make up my mind that I would tell about it, and then it came to me, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord,' and I thought I would reveal my cause unto him, and ask him to deliver me out of her hand. While I was praying over it, the girl came in and said she was going into the country. At the same time he put it into the heart of this good Christian woman, whom I had not seen for years, to find out where I lived and come to me. 'He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.'"

These few out of many similar experiences show what is the daily life of this saint; but the spirit that breathes in her words and looks, the faith that can not be dismayed, can only be realized through intercourse with her. She is growing very feeble, and doubtless her work on earth is well-nigh finished. In regard to her departure, she manifests the utmost willingness to bide God's time, and the utmost confidence that he will sustain her to the end. She thinks she shall know when the last hours come, and

realize whither she is going, and yet it may be with her as with another Christian eminent for his piety, of whom it was said, "God enabled him so often to bear testimony to his grace and loving kindness through life, he required none at his death."

The last time I visited her, she said, "I have always had perfect trust and assurance, but I have not been able to rejoice. I have had calm, but not joy. I wanted that, and the other evening, a dear Christian friend called on me, and I asked her to pray that I might receive the spirit of rejoicing. She prayed most earnestly, and my soul was filled with great joy, and it has not left me since. I am indeed, made 'glad according to the days wherein I have been afflicted.' "

* * * * *

The above record was made a few years ago. It was prompted by a desire to retain somewhat of this beautiful life which had been such a blessing to my own. As I take up the broken thread, these words of deep meaning, uttered so long ago, come to mind with new force: "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

When I learned, one cold, stormy morning, that at day-break Mrs. Pithey had entered into

rest, the dull winter air seemed brightened as I thought of her exceeding joy.

The last two years of her life were marked with increased feebleness and suffering; they were also marked with the same serene faith and abiding patience. God had kindly ordered that a young lady whom Mrs. Pithey had been instrumental in bringing into a life of most blessed consecration, should have the privilege of doing much for her comfort during her last days.

Her funeral services, held in Centenary Methodist Church, were attended by a large audience. Rev. Mr. Stone gave many interesting incidents illustrating her life of faith, and said he wished it could be known how much Mrs. Pithey had done for others in the last ten years, by rendering material, as well as spiritual, aid. She was generous to a fault, some said, but God not only provided for her own wants, but gave her, even in her helplessness, the means to relieve others.

Rev. Mr. Adams said her life was remarkable in that it demonstrated the power of prayer. It had led him to believe firmly in answer to prayer for material blessings. He met a man the day after Mrs. Pithey died, who told him that one morning he was deeply impressed with the idea that he ought to send Mrs. Pithey

a barrel of flour. He was very busy, and tried to drive the idea from his mind, but in the midst of all his business it would not leave him, and at last as a relief he went out and ordered the flour sent. Mrs. Pithey had been praying for it at that very time, as they had none in the house, and when it came she was not in the least surprised.

Dr. Hatfield spoke of her life at some length, and gave many incidents illustrative of her beautiful faith. She called at his house one day soon after her husband died (she was then able to go out somewhat, though feeble). She was returning from a call on the daughter of a friend who had just died. As she was going to the house she felt chilled by the wind, as her clothing was not sufficient to protect her. She thought how nice a warm shawl would be, and asked the Lord if he took the same view of it as she did, to send her one. Just as she was leaving, after her call, one of the daughters said, "Wait a minute, Mrs. Pithey; mother left something for you." And going into another room she brought out a nice, new shawl, adding, "Mother had only worn this two or three times, and she wanted you to have it." And Mrs. Pithey folded the warm shawl about her and went out into the cold, rejoicing in the comfort it gave, and think-

ing that it was just like the Lord to send it.

One day in the early spring Dr. H. went to call on her. The street in which she lived was particularly unpleasant at that time of the year. As he made his way through the mud and the groups of noisy, dirty children, there came over him a sense of wonder that God should let such a saint live in a place so repulsive. He thought, "If it was my daughter, I'd work my fingers to the bone rather than leave her in such a place." As he went in, Mrs. Pithey met him with a shining face. "O, Dr. Hatfield!" she said, "I was just thinking I should have to send for you, I wanted so much to tell you how I thank God he has put me in just such a place as this, and left me with no one but himself to rely upon, that I might find out how gloriously he can fill the soul and satisfy it with his love. I never should have understood this if everything else had not failed me. Now, I know he can make me happy anywhere and under any circumstances." "This was truly the power of God. I felt rebuked for my lack of faith."

In closing, Dr. Hatfield spoke of the conditions necessary to such a sublime realization of a life of trust: "We might venture on the kind of life Mrs. Pithey lived, and fail, simply

because we lacked her consecration, her utter abandonment of self to the will of God, and her entire reliance upon him. There could be no shamming with God. If we would have Mrs. Pithey's answer to prayer, we must have her dauntless faith and her willingness that God should do with us exactly as he pleases. Without these conditions there can be no such life as that over which we rejoice to-day."

A stranger who had never seen Mrs. Pithey in life said, after looking upon the still, white face, "How lovely! God's seal of peace seemed to be in every line." We learned that in the very last days of conflict with pain and fever and restlessness her faith failed not, even for earthly things. She asked the nurse for an orange to allay her fever, and when she told her that there were none in the house and no money to buy any, she said, "Oh, well, never mind. I can tell the Lord about it;" and she did. In a few minutes a lady came in and brought her quite a quantity of the very nicest oranges. Who can measure the depth of meaning in the words that trembled on the white lips when in the early dawn they told her she was almost home. They were only two: "Thank God!"

A LESSON FROM LIFE.

The great secret of spiritual perfection is expressed in the words of St. Ignatius Loyola, *Hoc vult Deus*. God wishes me to stand in this post, to fulfill this duty, to suffer this disease, to be afflicted with this calamity, this contempt, this vexation. God wishes this, whatsoever the world and self-love may dictate,—*hoc vult Deus*. His will is my law.—BROADSTONE OF HONOUR.

WE had spent the long summer afternoon on the cool sea-beach, with the salt air tossing our hair and brightening our cheeks. How delicious it was to get away from the city's noise and heat into this dreamy stillness, broken only by the plashing of the white caps of foam that gathered slowly and then broke into long lines of creamy spray. Later we rode home by the western promenade, for the sunset. It was a companion picture for the quiet summer sea, that mass of billowy crumpled clouds, amber, and flame, and tender rose and violet, through which we caught here and there the pale blue of the sky. Into this mass of color the distant mountains rose film-like and beautiful.

"How do people live who never get a sight of the mountains, or the sea, or a grand sunset like this?" I asked, as we sat looking into the shining depths before us.

"Perhaps all lives that are true and patient, have some compensation for the lack of the beautiful things they love and long for." Belle answered so quietly it surprised me a little, for she was not given to sentiment,—of utterance at least. Afterward I understood her meaning better.

"Now we must come back to practical life," she said when the sunset had faded. "I believe I'll drive round to my dressmaker's, on our way home. It will save time to-morrow." We rode out of the broad, quiet streets till we came to one noisy and crowded. We stopped before a house small and plain as it well could be, and yet there was a clean look about it, and through the twilight, as I waited for Belle, there stole the faint, subtle perfume of heliotrope and mignonette. When she came out, I caught the sound of a voice, clear and sweet, giving some parting advice and a cheery "good evening."

"If there's anything in a voice, you have an agreeable dressmaker," I said as Belle took the lines.

"I wish you knew what that woman has been to me," she replied. "I was thinking of her when you spoke of living without mountains, and sunsets, and the sea. This woman loves all these things as much as I do, and seldom has

a chance to enjoy either, and yet she has taught me the greatest spiritual lesson I have ever learned. Her life, filled with monotonous sewing from morning to night, has been of more practical value to me than all the sermons I ever heard."

"Do tell me about her. It has almost spoiled this glorious day, thinking of her being shut up to sewing in this close street."

As we drove home in the moonlight Belle told me how she had been lifted by this poor dressmaker into a higher plane of Christian life and faith.

"You know how everything seemed to combine against me last winter. Mother was kept in her room almost all the time by rheumatism. Bridget's sister was taken sick, and she was obliged to leave to take care of her, and the new help in the kitchen was trial enough, I thought. Then, just as Mr. Needham's meetings began, the boys came down with the measles, and a week after, Allie came home one day from school, her face all swollen with the mumps. For days before the children were taken sick they seemed possessed with evil spirits. Dr. Gregg told me afterwards, it was not wickedness at all, but just the disease coming on that made them cross and fretful. But I didn't know anything about this, and instead

of helping them by being patient, made them worse by my fault-finding and severity. Those were dreadful days. I believe I shall never look back upon them without shame and humiliation. I really took credit to myself that I was so disturbed by being kept from the meetings, and sometimes when I heard others tell how greatly they were blessed, I thought it my duty to leave things to take care of themselves and go to the meetings. At the very last I did attend a few, but failed to receive the benefit I expected, and then I felt rebellious at having lost such opportunities.

“As spring came on, matters were not much better. Mother’s rheumatism had left her, but she was so enervated by the warm days that she still kept her room. The children had not fully recovered from their measles and mumps, and were looking pale and thin. Just then I was invited to go to the mountains for the summer with the Vaughns—Carrie and I were always intimate, and her father wanted me to go to keep her company; she has been so lonely since her mother died. Mother said she would write to Aunt Mary to come and stay with her, and I might go. Though she didn’t hint anything of the kind, I think mother was so much troubled by my discontent that she would gladly have exchanged me for Aunt Mary. But

though I was determined to endure my martyrdom—as I thought it—I manifested anything but a martyr's grace and courage.

“ You know how spring sewing drags along, and what a burden it seems under such circumstances. I really had nothing decent to wear that was suitable for the season, and one afternoon started out in sheer desperation to find my dressmaker and see when she could come. Imagine my dismay when told at her boarding place that she had left the city on account of sickness, and would not return for six weeks or more. I was thoroughly discouraged as I walked home, and sincerely thought myself the most forlorn and wretched being in the world. As I passed the house we have just left, I noticed a plain card in the window, with the word, “ Dressmaking,” on it. There was a directness in this simple way of advertising that pleased me. The house itself attracted my attention. It had a better appearance than the others. Something said—my good angel, I suppose—‘ How do you know but that you can find some one to do your work here? I stopped a moment, and then walked on, thinking it would be unwise to have work done by a perfect stranger. But again something drew me back to the house, and I thought I could make inquiries, at least.

"My ring was answered by a little girl, who showed me into a plain, neat parlor, and said she would speak to her mother. There were pictures and books about the room, and everything indicated care and good housekeeping.

"As I sat waiting, my eye fell on a motto framed and hung on the wall. It was only the two words, 'Be Content,' and below it another, 'I am with you always.' The first was a common phrase enough, the other I had read in my Bible many a time, but both the injunction and the assurance had a new meaning as I saw them in that room where I had expected to find only what pertained to dress-making. I can not tell you how those simple words, 'Be content,' reproached me, neither how full of comfort to my weary soul was the other sweet assurance of the divine presence. With an overwhelming sense of regret the thought came to me, that this Friend of friends had been near through all the dreary weeks that lay behind me, had been with me all the same, though I had missed his gracious help and comfort—because I would not take it.

"I hardly knew what to say when Mrs. Grant (for so she introduced herself, with a lady-like quietness) came in. I liked the specimens of work she showed me, and before I left had arranged to bring my work to her.

‘I can’t go out,’ she had said, ‘as I have two little children,’ (had they had the measles and mumps? I involuntarily queried to myself), ‘and I can’t leave them, but I think my work will give satisfaction.’

“There were so many questions I wanted to ask her, but her quiet reticence repelled anything that seemed like curiosity.

“To make a long story short, I found her an excellent dressmaker, but that is the least of what she has been to me.

“Those mottoes followed me, and I felt sure they were connected with the serene cheerfulness of her life, outwardly so full of weary monotonous toil. I learned that this was so, though at first she rarely spoke of any matters save those that related to business.

“Perhaps she would never have been to me other than a quiet, cheerful little woman had she not found out that I was in trouble and needed help. I was telling her one day of the dreadful trouble that I had passed through during the winter, and then she in turn told me how her little girl was taken sick with scarlet fever just as the baby was getting over the whooping cough.

“‘How *did* you live through it, with your housework and dressmaking on your hands?’ I asked.

“ ‘As I’ve lived through every hard time—I was helped through,’ she answered brightly.

“She told me how she had counted upon going now and then to the revival meetings, and what a disappointment it had been to her, just as it had been to me, but her experience and mine were widely different, because she had behaved differently under similar trials.

“ ‘I tried not to fret about what couldn’t be helped,’ she said, ‘and in the still, lonely nights, when I was watching with Nettie, I had such a sense of my Savior’s presence, and such comfort in the sweet Bible promises, that I was filled with a quiet rest, such as I hardly could have found in a public meeting, however delightful.’

“One day I spoke to her of the mottoes. ‘They were given to me by a friend, some time ago,’ she said, ‘and have always helped me. Nettie was sick in this room, and my weary eyes often rested on the assurance of my Savior’s constant and abiding love and care. That word *always*, so grew upon me in richness of meaning. Since my husband’s death, I have many times been filled with a great dread of what might come in the future. Fear of being unable to support my children, fear of their being taken away from me, has well-nigh overwhelmed me, but when Nettie was brought

so near death with this dreadful disease, and times were so hard, I found that word full of blessed consolation. It covered all coming time, and I *felt* that I could *never* be left desolate.' "

We reached home all too soon, for I wanted to hear more of this woman, whose voice had spoken for her soul's peace. I did not have an opportunity after this to learn further about her, as Belle was called away from the city. But to-day on my table is a little bunch of sweet-breathed heliotrope and mignonette, and it brings to mind the evening perfume that came to me in the dusty street, and the sweeter fragrance of that simple woman's brave, patient life.

I am reminded too of Owen Meredith's beautiful thought in the closing chapter of "Lucile:"

" No stream from its source flows seaward,
How lonely soever its course,
But what some land is gladden'd.
No star ever rose and set, without influence somewhere.
Who knows what earth needs from earth's lowest creature?
No life can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife,
And all life not be purer and stronger thereby."

REJOICING IN HOPE.

"God does not send strange flowers every year.
When the spring winds blow o'er the pleasant places,
The same dear things lift up the same fair faces;
The violet is here.

It all comes back; the odor, grace, and hue;
Each sweet relation of its life repeated;
No blank is left; no looking-for is cheated:
It is the thing we knew.

So after the death winter it must be,
God will not put strange signs in the heavenly places:
The old love shall look out from the old faces.
Veilchen! I shall have thee."

DEAR LOUIE: Your kind invitation came to-day. I will spend a few days with you on the way to visit my husband's family. I have most reluctantly consented to undertake this journey. Everything is a painful effort to me now, and has been since Edward died.

Be prepared to see a faded, wretched old woman in place of the happy girl you used to know. I would not intrude my sorrowful self upon you, did I not believe you really want to see me, miserable as I am.

Your broken-hearted KATE.

The post-man brought me this letter one summer morning.

Kate Thornton and I had been schoolmates. She was one of the brightest, most sweet-tempered of our large class of girls. We all

predicted for her a sunny, joyous future, and for some years after we graduated our predictions were fully realized. She was the centre of life in her father's beautiful home, and when she left it for one of her own, her letters were full of the perfect happiness she had found there. Her husband was exactly her ideal, and once she wrote me: "I should be quite satisfied to have life go on just as it is now forever. I sometimes think I am too happy, but it's my nature. I don't believe I ever could be real miserable, as some people I know."

Not long after, her husband was taken from her very suddenly, and she sank under the blow, as such exuberant natures so often do.

A deep melancholy settled over her. Although both her husband and herself were Christians, a gloomy doubt kept her from the comfort her religion should have brought. Her friends all spoke and wrote of the great change that had come over her, and I must confess, when I looked into the white, worn face set in the heavy black crape, my own heart failed me.

She told me all about her husband's death, the first evening after she came, and I tried to comfort her as best I could. But she met all words of consolation with the blankness of her own despair.

"Did you rest at all last night?" I asked when I met her in the morning.

"I suppose I might as well confess — you know I told you everything at school," she answered, with a dreary little smile; "I don't rest now at night. I didn't retire early as you advised. I can't sleep, and the nights seem so terribly long, I sit up as late as I can."

"And what were you doing all that time alone, poor child? Why didn't you speak to me?"

"Oh, it isn't worth while to keep others awake when it would do no good. I was reading and thinking."

"Something soothing, I hope?"

"Quite the contrary. I am not easily soothed now-a-days. Last night I was reading something you'll not like at all. Once I should not have given it a second thought. Now I feel such dreadful things are possible. It was that little poem Strauss wrote to his family just before he died. I came across it the other day, and saved it; and last night, as I was looking in my traveling-bag for something, I chanced upon it—just at the wrong time, I know you'll say."

"But, Kate dear, why will you read such gloomy things? I remember that poem. It is the most pitiful thing ever written, I believe.

You are not an unbeliever, like him. Broken hearted you may be, for your sorrow is bitter, but not hopeless, I am sure; for you belong to the household of faith, though now for a little time you are in the dark. Strauss stood blank and hopeless before the future life, because he had sold his birthright, and would have none of its blessed promise. But the very pathos and sadness of the sentiments expressed in that poem belie his own utterances. Only think of it—a man with *his* spiritual possibilities exhorting his wife and children to live on the past; saying that simply to remember that, was immortality enough I wish all the young souls he has dazzled by his brilliant but godless life could feel its utter dreariness at the last. It's not wholesome reading for you, Kate, and you know it is not true; your own sorrowful heart, the yearnings we all have for those who have gone from us, cry out against such a belief."

"I suppose I *know* it is not true, but that is quite a different thing from *feeling*. I ought to believe, to have faith, but I don't. There seems no way out of this gloomy doubt that shuts me round with a terrible darkness. You are disappointed in me, Louie, and so are all my friends. . I used to be so brave and full of hope, but it's all gone. It seems as if the weight of

a thousand years were upon me, or as if I had died and been buried, and some desolate old woman had risen in my place."

The breakfast bell ended our talk for the time.

Poor Kate! I thought, as we passed down stairs, how am I ever to help you? Words are of so little use when one is sinking in the deep waters of an overwhelming sorrow.

One morning, a few days after this, when I came up from the kitchen, where I had been busy with Bridget for a while, I found Kate reading Emerson. She cared so little now for anything intellectual that I was heartily glad to see her interested in a new book.

"Read aloud, will you, Kate?" I said, as I brought my sewing. "You know Emerson is a favorite of mine, though you used to call him 'misty,' at school, and say he wasn't bright enough for you."

"I've no taste for bright things now," she answered wearily.

She looked so haggard and worn in the light of the dull August morning, that I felt more than ever the ravages sorrow had made upon the sunny young face.

"Here is something that quite expresses my feeling," she said, after a little silence. "It is Emerson's account of the two men who

were seeking for light, but found none;" and she read aloud: "Many years ago, there were two men in the United States senate, both of whom are now dead. Both were men of distinction, and took an active part in the politics of their day and generation. They were men of intellect, and one of them, at a later period, gave to a friend this anecdote: He said that, when he entered the senate, he became in a short time intimate with one of his colleagues and, though attentive enough to the routine of public duty, they daily returned to each other, and spent much time in conversation on the immortality of the soul, and other intellectual questions, and cared for little else. When my friend at last left congress, they parted, his colleague remaining there; and, as their homes were widely distant from each other, it chanced that he never met him again, until, twenty-five years afterward, they saw each other, through open doors, at a distance, in a crowded reception at the President's house in Washington.

"Slowly they advanced towards each other, as they could, through the brilliant company, and at last met; said nothing, but shook hands long and cordially. At last his friend said, 'Any light, Albert?' 'None,' replied Albert. 'Any light, Louis?' 'None,' replied

he. They looked in each other's eyes silently, gave one more shake each to the hand he held, and thus parted for the last time."

"I am like those men," Kate said when she had finished reading, "quite in the dark, and groping for the light. Cry for it as I will, I do not find it. Neither does it matter, as Emerson goes on to say, that this is an argument for something beyond this life. I want more than this, or nothing. I want to know surely that there is an hereafter, that Edward has gone to heaven, and that I am going there too, some time. I could wait patiently if I felt sure there was anything at the end. I thought I believed, but now I doubt *everything*."

Bridget came to tell me the "blueberry man was in the kitchen, and wanted to know how many berries he should leave."

"Come down with me, Kate," I said, hoping to divert her from her sad thoughts. "You were such a good housekeeper, I want your judgment."

"You'll hardly need my advice over such berries as these," Kate said, when she saw those the old man had brought. They were full and luscious, with a rich glossy color, such as berries only have that grow on the mountains or where the sea air blows over them.

"This is bad weather for your business, isn't

it, Uncle Joe?" I said, as he emptied the berries.

"Yes, it's bad pickin', an' it's sticky an' dirty out o' doors. But I reck'n this spell o' weather can't hold on many days. It'll be bright ag'in afore long. It's allus more pleasant after such dull weather."

There was a cheery sound in the old man's rough voice that made Kate look at him.

"I suppose you find it hard work sometimes, don't you?" she asked kindly.

"It's hard work pickin' berries for a livin' a'most any time, miss, but it's partic'lar hard when folks git on in life, like my ole woman an' me."

"Are you pretty well now?" I asked.

"Mid'lin', thank ye. This wet weather an' stoopin' so much kinder gives me the rheumatiz'. I reck'n a'most all o' us have trouble, one way or 'nother." He had noticed Kate's mourning, and her sad face. "But if we are Christian folks, it don't matter so much. I say to myself a'most every day, a few more trips an' I'll be through. An' when I lay down at night, with every bone in my body achin', I think how it'll not be long afore the restin' time 'll come. I can wait a bit, knowin' it's comin' for cert'in."

"You seem very sure," Kate said.

"An' why shouldn't I be sure, miss? We

have the Master's own word for it. He has said he'll come, an' he *will* come. No danger o' his goin' back on us. Folks in this world go back on us often 'nough, but he ain't like folks we have to do with here. It tells us in the blessed Book, that he won't never go back on his word. Why shouldn't we be sure, miss, if we only keep holt o' him?"

There was a kind of rough dignity about the old man, as he stood before us, with the blue-berry boxes in his arms. Poorly dressed and bowed with age, but with a calm assurance in his voice, as he said,—

"He has said he'll come, an' he *will* come."

The bronzed, wrinkled face, too, had a repose in it that was restful. I knew he would do Kate good, so I said,—

"Sit down, Uncle Joe, it'll rest you a bit." He said he must be going, but sat down, saying, as he did so,—

"P'raps ye think I haven't had no trouble like yourn, miss,"—looking at Kate. "I was brought up to foller the sea, an' I don't take kindly to the land; but there's nothing takes holt o' one like sich trouble as I know ye've had, from yer dress, if ye'll not mind my speakin' o' it, miss. It's five years, come fall, since my poor little Naudied. She was my darter 'Liza's child. She had a good many

others, an' her husban' was kinder shif'liss, an' they was glad to have Nan live with the ole woman an' me. We set heaps by her. She was a stiddy, handy little cre'ter. She'd allus come down the lane to open the gate for me, so I wouldn't have to git down from the wagin. I used to think when I see her standin' in the sun, her hair an' cheeks a shinin', she was han'-sum as a picter. Some days I wouldn't git home till dark, specially in the fall, when I was sellin' the veg'tables, but no matter how late it was, I hear'd her little voice, callin' out in the dark, 'It's all right, gran'pa, come on!' She took cold waiting for me in the rain one night, an' the fever set in, an' she niver got over it. It a'most broke my heart hearin' her take on so. She was out o' her head all the time.

"The night afore she died she kept tossin' an' talkin' how she couldn't git the gate open, an' gran'pa didn't come. I jes' took her right up in my arms, an' walked about with her, an' told her gran'pa was all right, but it didn't do no good. She kep' cryin' an' talkin' 'bout the dark, an' the gate, an' me. But jest afore mornin' she grew still all of a sud'en; the scared look went out o' her face; it all brightened up, an' she looked at me smilin' an' nat'ral as could be, an' said, 'He's comin'! It's all

right, gran'pa!' an' then the little thing was gone.

"Poor little Nan," he said, as he wiped his eyes with his sleeve, "it was lonesome 'nough after she was gone, but I couldn't be sorry for her. She'd gone where she'd have fitter company for her than the ole woman an' me. The little white face niver lost its shinin', an' the folks all sed, when they see her in her coffin, she looked 'powerful happy.' I've niver got over the loss of my little Nan, but I'll see her afore long. I can't cal'late how it'll be at the last. Mebby it'll be all fog an' dark, as it was with poor Nan; but somehow I reckon on her bein' there waitin' to open the gate for me, an' hearin' her voice callin' to me, 'It's all right, gran'pa!' But any ways, the Master won't forget me no more'n he did her."

The old man had forgotten himself, and he rose hurriedly, saying, "I beg pardon for runnin' on so. It isn't often folks lis'en, as ye have, to an ole man like me. I allus love to talk o' little Nan."

"I thank you very much," Kate said, through her tears. "You have done me so much good."

"If I may make bold to say it, miss don't niver forgit he's comin,' sure, an' it'll be all right."

The rough, bent figure passed out into the dull mist, but he seemed somehow to carry a brightness with it.

Kate's tears were falling fast, but she said, as we went upstairs, "Do you think God sent that old man to me? His trouble and his faith have touched me more than anything has since Edward died. I wish he could know how he has helped me. The certainty of his simple assurance quiets me so. 'He has said he'll come and he *will* come.' There was no shadow of doubt in his voice as he said this. Now I understand the text for to-day. It was 're-joicing in hope,' but I thought it meant nothing to me. I was hopeless and had no cause to rejoice. Uncle Joe has illuminated it for me. How do you account for it, Louie—the hold this poor old man has upon spiritual things, while these grand intellectual minds grope in the darkness?"

"He simply takes God at his word. Sometimes I think it is the grandest possible attainment, so to comprehend God, his faithfulness, his love, his truth, that one can trust him without reserve, as Uncle Joe does. And by no mere intellectual search, be it never so long and weary, can we reach this; yet it is the heritage of all who have the childlike spirit of

this old man. I never meet such people as Uncle Joe—and there are more of them in the world than we are apt to think—but I am reminded of the many things hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes.”

KEEPING LENT.

Happiness is not our affair, but honesty and toil, and suffering and duty.—*Carlyle*.

I HAD often wondered what happy secret this woman's life held, that made it so serene and cheery. Most of us would have thought hers a hard lot, to wash and iron, day in and day out, whether the thermometer stood high or low, whether the atmosphere was stifling or chilling. She made other people's clothes clean and inviting, putting extra work into them when they were getting ready for the mountains or the sea-side, but with never a hope of rest or change for herself. The world is apt to forget that it requires as much grace to be patient and sweet-tempered in doing up frills and ruffles as in wearing them.

The one of whom I write is only a plain, simple washer-woman, but I am sure her name is written high on the heavenly record, as one who is faithful in her lot and place, making the best of life just as it is given into her hands.

We all have our work; it may be to write a poem, so grand and sweet it shall thrill a nation; it may be only to whiten a pillow-sham, so that it gives a sense of purity and comfort.

In either case it is the quality of our work and not its kind that proves our right to royalty. This woman's work was perfect in its kind, and moreover, she carried into her homely toil a patient, hopeful grace that beautified it and her. Her coming into the house was like the coming of the south wind that opens the violets in spring-time. It might be late of Saturday night, or in a dreary rain storm, but she had always some pleasant word of greeting, and always the same bright, patient face looked out from the grey waterproof hood.

One evening I found my way into her home. I had known all along that she had a home, in the true sense of the word, and that it would be clean and cheery, however poor. It is generally quite easy to tell the people who live in real homes, and those who have only the counterfeit. It had been one of those oppressive September days we sometimes get in the city, and the evening only brought a heaviness into the air that clung wearily to one, and made resistance an effort. As I made my way through the crowded, dirty street, with its unwholesome breath, I wondered how its inhabitants had lived through the summer heats. Right in the midst of all this I found the home I was looking for—a small bit of a cottage, like the others, and yet unlike. The patch of grass in

front had been coaxed into a fresh green, in spite of the heat and dust. The boxes of mint and old-fashioned flowers were doing their very best to make the place attractive and sweet.

Everything was as neat and tidy as human hands could make it, and the inside of the house was but a repetition of the outside. Tiny rooms, with but little show of furniture, but here and there a touch of something bright and fancy gave a look of home-likeness to the whole. There were a few small pictures, and little ornaments scattered about, but one good-sized picture, hung where the eye could easily take it in, gave me the key to this woman's beautiful life. It was a copy of that celebrated painting "Ecce Homo." There was the thorn-pierced brow, the blood drops of suffering, the tender, pitying eyes, the sad, heavenly beauty of the whole face. "Ecce Homo" was a reality to her, whatever it might be to art critics or learned philosophers.

"We have a large one at the church, but this is such a comfort to me," she said, looking at it with a kind of gentle reverence.

I went out of that small room comforted concerning this woman and her hard lot. She had borne the summer's heat and fatigue bravely, because Christ was in her home and heart,

because she beheld him, "the Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He knew it all. Those thirty years lived in humble toil make him the Friend of all the heavy laden.

* * * * *

A few years ago I wrote this of one known to me only as "Maggie," my washer-woman. Nevertheless, one of the saintly, beautiful lives, that magnify "His grace" in the close, unattractive streets and alleys of our great, crowded city.

The wear and strain of constant toil, day after day, and month after month, sometimes dim the pure gold of faith and patience, even in such steadfast souls; and I have often wondered how it would be with "my saint," as the swift years rolled by. New burdens, new troubles, I knew had come to her. This defenseless woman, working with her hard hands to make the bit of land and tiny home her own, was not beyond the reach of avarice, extortion we might have called it in the days gone by, when wrong-doing took sterner names than now. Through some flaw in her title, taken advantage of by the honorable (?) business man who knew her lack of understanding concerning this matter, she learned one day

that her scant earnings had well-nigh gone for naught, and must be paid over again. Her old father, grown childish and helpless, whom she had bravely kept with her as long as possible, was forced to go out among strangers; the "front" rooms were rented and her home became the two small ones in the rear. How ever linen could come out of that dark, crowded nothingness of space, clean and white, no one knew—but it did, all the same.

The past winter, with its pitiless storms, and its vexing, hindering snow blockades, has been test severe enough to the patience and serenity of those who have all the appliances for comfort and protection; what it has been to the multitudes with whom life is a hand-to-hand grapple for daily bread, God only knows.

For the first time Maggie failed to keep her appointments, and one dull March day I again sought the street where she lived.

I found her in her close, dark room burning with fever, and restless with pain. She told me the pitiful story of her old father's death, and the sorrow of her tender Irish heart was in the words, "To think, miss, I didn't go to see him at Christmas. I never missed it before, but the roads were so bad I couldn't get any

one to take me. And he must have been looking for me, I am sure, and wondering why I didn't come. It was hard to have him go and not know I meant to come and see him." Those of us who understand how the tenderest words seem not half what we would have made them, when the hands we love are folded, and the dear eyes are closed forever, and only those, can measure the sadness of such regret. It is the bitterness of grief, and the poor have much of it.

When I had tried to comfort her as best I could, I said, "It is hard to lie here and suffer." Very quietly she answered, "It is Lent, you know. I am only entering into Christ's suffering. He bore so much for me, and it's so little I can do for him."

I felt sure then, that no dart of sorrow had pierced the stronghold of her loving faith, and that she was more than conqueror "through him that loved her."

Just before Easter a little bunch of lilies, pure and white and heavenly, set round with pale, delicate sprays of fragrant heliotrope, found its way into this back room.

She was coming back to life, after having been so near death's door that the rite of "extreme unction" had been administered to her. She was thinking, not drearily, but quite

cheerfully, of taking up the old burden again.

A flush of joyous surprise broke over her face as the hard hands closed around the fair, sweet blossoms. Then, after her rapid and childlike thanks, she said with a wistful gladness, "Next Sunday is Easter. If I only grow strong enough to get to the church. I can ride most all the way. It would be so much to me—it is such a blessed time." And the tender light in her eyes said, "He is risen! He is risen!"

The glad Easter morning dawned with its golden sunshine and lovely, fragrant offerings in homes and in churches, from many who had kept Lent and crowned that keeping with rarest gifts on this memorial day. Good and beautiful, and no doubt precious in the sight of the Master, yet, in the midst of this incense of fairest bloom, this rapture of triumphant, gladsome song, what heart could keep back a tender, jubilant refrain, thinking of the many, who all unseen and unknown, in our busy city, had "kept Lent" after the truest, most blessed fashion, by enduring suffering and sorrow, toil and hardship with a hopeful, gentle grace for "Christ's sweet sake."

And of all the rare and costly offerings, are not such lives at once the loveliest gift that could be brought him and the highest trophies

of his victory over death? Who but a *risen*
Christ could give power in the very midst of
human sorrow and pain and toil

“To feel, although no tongue can prove,
That every cloud that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love.”

THE END.

